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stock ownership. These facts are mentioned merely to point out what the author would readily admit, namely, that his treatment by no means exhausts the question discussed. It seems, however, that the author may be justly criticized for omitting to describe the methods of evaluating the traction property by the Traction Evaluation Commission. He gave the methods employed by the Harlan Committee, by the Civic Federation Report, and mentioned the doctrine of the Supreme Court and the Interstate Commerce Commission on this point. After leaving the question the author uses the evaluation of the engineers or the Traction Evaluation Commission for all further discussion but gives no adequate description of the methods of this commission. As the justice or injustice of the return to the city and the companies is treated in a later chapter a discussion of the evaluation assumed seems peculiarly appropriate. In chapter xiv the author states that the commission included the value of the franchises with the value of the physical property but leaves out any discussion of the method by which the commission evaluated a franchise.

Within the limitations above suggested the treatment is a valuable history of the franchise grants to street railways with a fairly good summary of the provisions of the latest ordinances. The author's estimate of operating expenses and reserves as 78 per cent. after the period of rehabilitation, is too high according to the current estimates on this subject, 70 per cent. including the reserves being probably a more prevalent estimate. His conclusions based on this estimate would accordingly be erroneous. The court records in these traction cases are being bound in a series of between twenty and thirty volumes, so that any one who wishes to make a further study of the question will find an abundance of material. He will also find a sympathetic co-operation from the managers of the companies, who have adopted a policy of wide-open publicity.

SPURGEON BELL

CHICAGO

Confessions of a Railroad Signalman. By JAMES O. FAGAN. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1908. 8vo, pp. 181:

This little volume on railroad accidents might have had as a sub-title "A Plea for Personality" or "An Arraignment of Railroad Labor Organizations." It is a suggestive work written by a man who thinks for himself and knows how to express his thoughts. He is fortunate in his twenty-seven years of experience as a telegraph operator and signalman. Otherwise he would be assailed from certain quarters as academic and theoretical for he has brought out into the open some considerations which are neither pleasing nor reassuring.

Having been written originally as essays for popular consumption the book is not as coherent and well-knit as one would wish, but the three main propositions of the author stand out fairly clearly. (1) The primary cause of railroad accidents is the negligence of employees. "Fully 85 per cent. of the fatalities that occur on our roads" can be traced to this. Vast expenditures for safety appliances and signal systems will avail little in the face of such a situation. (2) The proper cure for this negligence is stern discipline, but a survey of the systems of discipline in use results in their being characterized as inadequate and useless—as framed to secure harmony between management and employees

rather than to safeguard the public. (3) The agents mainly responsible for the lack of proper discipline are the railroad labor organizations. Weaknesses of management, particularly the lack of out-of-door supervision, are not condoned; benefits of unions when acting in legitimate channels are fully recognized: but the net conclusion is "As matters stand today between labor organizations and railroad managers it is very doubtful if any practical system of supervision of discipline . . . can be adequately enforced" again, "The influence of the railroad labor organization has been consistently exerted . . . to nullify discipline, to destroy personal management and authority, and to obliterate from all schedules and working agreements any reference to a consideration for the paramount interests of the traveling public."

It is refreshing just now to have our attention drawn to the fact that railroad management is not responsible for all the shortcomings of the railway system. Mr. Fagan's work will not be palatable to a good many interests. Nevertheless it is written by a man who should know whereof he speaks and his propositions are backed by a wealth of concrete illustrations and examples. There can be no doubt that the case he presents is worthy of careful consideration. He works out no remedy in detail but states very emphatically that the problem must "be taken in hand and solved by the people." It is understood that his remedy is to be presented in later writings.

L. C. MARSHALL

Soziale Gesetzgebung und Statistik. By N. REICHESBERG. Bern: Scheitlin, Spring & Cie., 1908. 8vo, pp. vii+138.

This essay is the outgrowth of an address delivered by the author before the *Schweizerische Vereinigung zur Förderung des internationalen Arbeiterschutzes* in 1903, and of the subsequent attention which he gave to the subject in carrying out the commission of that society to prepare a statement of the arguments in favor of governmental provision for a Swiss federal system of social statistics. General introductory chapters discuss the function of social legislation and the statistics which social legislation requires. Social legislation signifies, as the author conceives it, the entrance of the legislative authority as a partisan into class conflicts with the purpose of working for the success of some definite social ideal involved. Especially this legislation should work for the abolition of class conflict, the increasing efficiency of production, the more widespread enjoyment of the benefits of this efficiency, and the removal of harmful conditions surrounding those who work. The rôle of social statistics is delineated in harmony with this view, after the history of governmental statistics has been so traced as to show how the gathering of facts aiding government purposes naturally has caused an illumination of social problems partial in correspondence with the partiality of the interests of the ruling classes. The remainder of the essay (about two-thirds of the whole, in extent) is devoted to a development of the project of federal social statistics with reference to the actual system of official statistics in Switzerland.